UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/825/Part II/3
11 August 1994

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

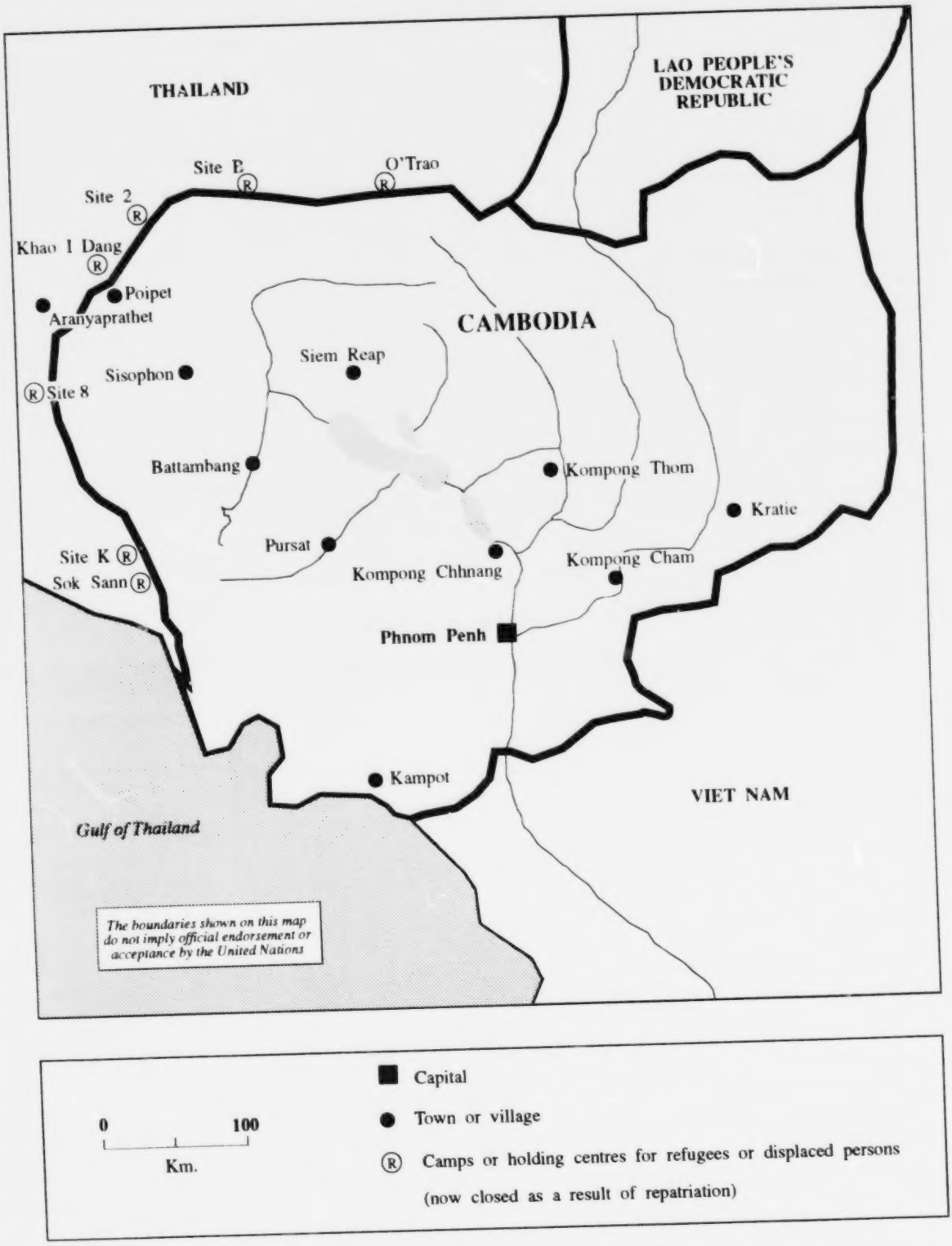
PART II. ASIA AND OCEANIA

Section 3 - Cambodia

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.94-03123

CAMBODIA


THAILAND
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
Site B
O'Trao
Site 2
Khao I Dang
Poipet
Aranyaprathet
CAMBODIA
Siem Reap
Sisophon
Site 8
Battambang
Kompong Thom
Kratie
Pursat
Site K
Sok Sann
Kompong Chhnang
Kompong Cham
Phnom Penh
Kampot
VIET NAM
Gulf of Thailand
The boundaries shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations
Capital
Town or village
Camps or holding centres for refugees or displaced persons (now closed as a result of repatriation)
0
100
Km.

II.3 CAMBODIA

Country Overview

Characteristics of the returnee/refugee population

(a) **Returnees**

1. The main movement phase of the Cambodian repatriation operation was completed by 30 April 1993, in time for most returnees to participate in the May 1993 elections, in compliance with the Paris Peace Agreement of 23 October 1991.

2. During the period from January to April 1993, a total of 155,412 Cambodians returned to Cambodia, mainly from Thailand. The great majority, 133,474 persons, was processed through the reception centres set up by UNHCR in cooperation with the Cambodian Red Cross and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This number was higher than the anticipated 110,000 originally expected to repatriate.

3. Between 30 March 1992 and April 1993, a total of 387,180 persons had returned to Cambodia. This number can be broken down as follows: 385,172 from Thailand; 1,181 from Indonesia; 622 from Viet Nam and 205 from other countries. Of the total number of 387,180 who repatriated, 16,732 were not assisted by UNHCR as they returned spontaneously from the Thai-Cambodian border; 5,306 who had returned spontaneously sought and received UNHCR assistance; and 801 were repatriated by the Thai authorities and received UNHCR assistance. Between May 1993 and 31 May 1994, 279 Cambodians returned voluntarily to Cambodia.

4. The majority of the returnees went back to Battambang province which absorbed 114,736 persons; 92,848 returned to Banteay Meanchay province, 31,125 to Siem Reap, 28,010 to Kandal, 25,768 to Pursat and 16,058 to Takeo. The rest of the returnees were scattered among 15 other provinces. In total, 75 per cent of returnees went back to the four north-western provinces of Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap and Pursat where they constituted 15.26 per cent of the population. In the remaining provinces, returnees make up about 4 per cent of the population.

5. Most of the returnees originated from rural areas and had become semi-urban in the many years spent on the Thai-Cambodian border. The vast majority of returnees nevertheless returned to rural areas where they had family members and/or land.

6. It is noteworthy that the four Cambodian factions respected the freedom of choice of the place of return. Most returnees have chosen to return to areas controlled by the Government of Cambodia; 33,169 opted to return to areas then controlled by the "Front Uni National Pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif" (FUNCINPEC); while 2,660 returned to areas under the control of the Party of Democratic Kampuchea.

7. Of the returnee population, 53 per cent were women, which represents the same percentage as that of the overall female population of Cambodia. Among the returnee women, special attention was given to the numerous female heads of household. Throughout the repatriation exercise, UNHCR placed considerable emphasis on ensuring women's participation in the implementation of projects, particularly in the field of health, food, water and sanitation. In addition, agencies funded by UNHCR endeavoured to employ up to 50 per cent of women in their projects.

8. At the time the repatriation started, the composition of the caseload in camps in Thailand was as follows: 92.6 per cent were below the age of 44, and 47 per cent below the age of 15. The average family size was 4.4 persons.

9. As far as reintegration assistance is concerned, and due to a shortage of arable land, the great majority of returnees (i.e. over 87 per cent) eventually opted for "Option C", namely cash assistance. Nearly seven per cent chose "Option B" (i.e. building materials with housing plot) whereas only some three per cent took advantage of "Option A", agricultural land.

(b) **Ethnic Vietnamese Cambodians**

10. By the end of 1993, no solution had been found for ethnic Vietnamese Cambodians who fled Cambodia following the March 1993 massacres. Some 6,000 were still stranded on the Cambodian/Vietnamese border. Their basic food needs were being met by the World Food Programme (WFP). UNHCR continued to monitor the situation and to advocate for durable solutions on their behalf.

(c) **Individual cases**

11. Some twenty individual cases who had been recognized as refugees under UNHCR's Mandate were in Cambodia by the end of 1993 and were being assisted pending the identificaiton of a durable solution.

Major developments (1993 and first quarter 1994)

12. At the end of 1993, many returnees were still being assisted by UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) mainly through the provision of the 400-day food allowance. Many returnees initially reached acceptable level of reintegration and security. However, this positive trend was subsequently reversed when the security in certain areas of the country became precarious and volatile during the first quarter of 1994. Renewed fighting erupted in March-April 1994 between government troops and the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK) which led to some 60,000 persons becoming internally displaced in Battambang and Banteay Meanchay provinces (including an estimated 25 per cent returnees). In addition, some 26,000 sought temporary refuge in Thailand in order to escape the fighting and were subsequently returned to Cambodia. During the same period, many houses were destroyed and UNHCR-funded Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) were suspended. Thus, a rather satisfactory returnee situation became fragile and needed to be addressed.

13. At the second meeting of the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia, which took place on 10-11 March 1994 in Tokyo, contributions amounting to $ 777 million were announced for 1994 and 1995. Of this amount, pledges earmarked for demining activities by the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) amounted to $ 15,770,700.

14. One of the main obstacles in achieving an acceptable level of self-sufficiency continued to be the lack of land available to those returnees who had chosen the land option (Option A). UNHCR continued to monitor the availability of land for returnees and the issuance of land tenure certificates.

15. The mass exodus of over 30,000 ethnic Vietnamese Cambodians took place before the May 1993 elections, and so far this group has not yet been able to return. 6,000 are stranded on the Cambodian/Vietnamese border and the remainder are in Viet Nam. Further attacks on ethnic Vietnamese took place in Cambodia in the first quarter of 1994. The fate of these ethnic Vietnamese is still unclear and important legislation on nationality/citizenship still needs to be adopted. UNHCR has indicated its preparedness to assist these groups to repatriate and reintegrate in their former places of residence.

Programme objectives and priorities

16. The main phase of the repatriation exercise was concluded in April 1993. However, there are still up to 6,800 Cambodians in Viet Nam, Indonesia, and Malaysia who are expected to return voluntarily and who will be assisted by UNHCR with transportation and reintegration.

17. UNHCR will also ensure that the basic needs of refugees recognized under the UNHCR Mandate are met pending the identification of durable solutions and that adequate safeguards on asylum are reflected in the new legislation.

18. UNHCR will provide limited assistance to the internally displaced persons (IDPs), thus complementing the assistance provided by WFP and other organizations with a view to avoiding a renewed exodus. UNHCR will also assist persons who find temporary shelter in Thailand whenever they return to Cambodia.

19. As far as the 6,000 ethnic Vietnamese stranded on the Cambodian/Vietnamese border are concerned, UNHCR will continue its monitoring role, advocate for durable solutions and will provide assistance upon their return.

20. Certain aspects of the reintegration of the 387,000 Cambodians who returned during the mass repatriation will be addressed, namely the provision of identity cards to all returnee families, the availability of agricultural land, the issuance of relevant land titles and the monitoring of vulnerable returnees who cannot sustain themselves when food assistance is discontinued. At the same time, UNHCR will ensure that longer term assistance to returnee communities and vulnerable returnees will be gradually absorbed by other international organizations and NGOs.

21. Seminars on the promotion of refugee law and doctrine will be implemented for government officials, human rights groups and NGOs.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

Inter-Agency arrangements

22. By virtue of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between UNHCR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UNDP Office for Project Services (OPS) had established Provincial Support Units in the key returnee provinces in 1992 and 1993. The OPS implemented the Cambodia Resettlement and Reintegration project (CARERE), which implemented and coordinated reintegration assistance to returnee communities in close cooperation with the UNHCR Field Offices.

23. UNDP continued to assume increased responsibility for the reintegration programme which had been started jointly with UNHCR.

24. WFP will continue to distribute the 400 day food supply to returnee families from other countries in the region. They will also provide food to those persons, including returnees, who have been identified under their Vulnerable Groups Programme (VGP). In addition, WFP will provide food to the ethnic Vietnamese Cambodians stranded at the Cambodian/Vietnamese border on the Bassac River, should they be authorized to return to their former places of residence. Finally, WFP will assist in transporting and distributing food to IDPs and returnees who were forced to move from unsafe areas as a result of the fighting, or to persons returned to Cambodia after having sought temporary refugee abroad.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

25. The Cambodian Red Cross (CRC) which played a vital role in the main phase of the repatriation operation will continue to be UNHCR's main implementing partner in a number of fields such as logistics and transport of the various groups of concern to UNHCR (new returnees, IDPs including returnees, Cambodians of Vietnamese ethnic origin). The CRC will also continue to issue ID cards and to distribute household kits to new returnees.

26. CONCERN will provide experienced local staff to assist UNHCR in monitoring the IDP situation and in preparing land for returnees in Banteay Meanchey and Siem Reap provinces. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) will provide assistance to asylum-seekers and persons recognized as refugees under the mandate of UNHCR. As far as extremely vulnerable families are concerned, the Cambodian Family Development Services (CFDS) will provide counselling and assistance.

Special Programmes

27. All activities in Cambodia continue to be covered under a Special Programme, the Cambodian Voluntary Repatriation Operation.

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

28. The number of persons repatriated in 1993 was higher than anticipated: 155,412 persons were processed through reception centres rather than the anticipated 110,000.

29. Over 5,000 IDPs, mostly returnee families, had to flee fighting at Yeah Ath located at the outskirts of a returnee settlement in an area controlled by the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK). They were accommodated in the vacant UNHCR returnee reception centre in Banteay Meanchey province. Another 10,000 Cambodians, including many returnees, had also been displaced as a consequence of military conflict and were being monitored by UNHCR.

30. QIPs were implemented in 1993. However, the implementation period of many of the sub-projects had to be extended due to delays primarily because of security problems (numerous incidents involving threats against international staff and vehicle thefts involving violence). UNHCR nevertheless continued to monitor land preparation, QIPs implementation, ID card issuance and protection issues throughout 1993. CARERE, the main UNHCR partner in the rehabilitation, also faced delays in expanding its activities to additional provinces and in assuming the leading role in longer term development projects.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

31. In the first quarter of 1994, UNHCR's focus shifted from a pro-active to a more reactive monitoring role whenever feasible. However, the renewed fighting in March and April 1994 caused the internal displacement of some 60,000 IDPs, including some 25 per cent returnees, as well as the temporary flight to Thailand of some 26,000 persons. Thousands of homes and many QIPs were also destroyed. These developments were determining factors for UNHCR involvement and preparedness to respond to this emergency. In order to address this unexpected situation, operational programme activities in Cambodia had to be increased. At the same time and based on the MOU between UNHCR and UNDP, responsibility for medium to long term reintegration of returnees remained with UNDP. Food supply and distribution for returnees and IDPs continued to be assumed by WFP.

32. The situation of the 6,000 ethnic Vietnamese Cambodians on the border will be carefully monitored by UNHCR with a possible view to assisting in their return should this become an option. Their food supply is ensured by WFP.

33. In cooperation with the Cambodian Red Cross, the Secretariat of Rural Development and other agencies, provision has been made in 1994 to assist in the preparation of up to 3,000 hectares of land for returnees, and the issuance of up to 4,000 land titles for returnees. This had been delayed due to the insecure situation and re-mining activities.

34. The Cambodian Family Development Services (CFDS) will provide emergency assistance to especially vulnerable individuals whose number had increased as a direct result of recent fighting. The assistance provided will be oriented towards achieving self-sufficiency.

35. UNHCR will continue to assist new returnees from the region at a rate lower than anticipated. Promotion of refugee law will be carried out for government officials involving the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

36. The redeployment of a substantial amount of surplus non-expendable property, notably vehicles and communication equipment, from Cambodia to UNHCR programmes in Mozambique and Myanmar proceeded as planned in early 1994. A limited number of vehicles were retained for WFP to ensure adequate food distribution and transportation.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

37. UNHCR will continue to be involved in activities in Cambodia throughout 1995. The remaining caseload of Cambodians in the region and elsewhere will have to be assisted upon return to Cambodia. Cambodians of ethnic Vietnamese origin may be returning to their former places of residence and assistance to asylum-seekers and recognized refugees will have to be addressed. Efforts will also aim at consolidating activities in the promotion of refugee law. As far as movements of internally displaced persons are concerned, UNHCR will complement, whenever necessary, the activities undertaken by other agencies involved.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

38. Expenditure under salaries were higher than expected as a result of the employment of temporary staff required in connection with the closure of the UNHCR Field-Offices in Sisophon, Siem Reap and Pursat towards the end of 1993, and taking into account also slight delays in the closures, due to military conflict and to CARERE taking over the lead role in the implementation of the medium to longer term development projects and reintegration efforts. As a result of the closure of these Field Offices, expenditures under all remaining budget chapters, mainly non-staff costs, general operating expenses and office supplies and materials were lower than expected.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

39. A reduction in staffing levels for UNHCR Cambodia is envisaged as of the second half of 1994 following the completion of the mass repatriation of Khmer refugees, the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) towards reintegration, and the distribution of the 400-day food supplies to the returnees. In order to consolidate the completion of these activities and due to the uncertainty arising from the fragile politico-military situation, coupled with the existence of several thousands of ethnic Vietnamese on the Cambodian/Vietnamese border who might return to Cambodia at any time following the promulgation of the nationality/citizenship legislation in Cambodia, 16 temporary posts, including four international posts were extended in the Office of the Chief of Mission in Phnom Penh until 30 June 1994. At the same time, eight local temporary posts in the Sub-Office in Battambang were also extended for the same period. On the other hand, one international post of Administrative Secretary was discontinued as of 1 January 1994 and four posts, including one Senior Administrative Officer post and one JPO post are planned for discontinuation at 30 June 1994. As a result of these staffing changes, the net total 1994 revised requirements have increased, particularly under salaries and common staff costs.

40. Non-expendable property, comprising mainly equipment and vehicles which were used for the Cambodian repatriation operation have been redeployed to various UNHCR programmes outside Cambodia. Of the 141 vehicles identified as suitable for redeployment for other UNHCR operations, 56 vehicles were transported in phases to various destinations such as Bangladesh, the Lao Peole's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Mozambique, while 30 vehicles have been stored in Dubai for future deployment. Other non-expendable property, such as telecommunications equipment, four generators and 15 air-conditioners were also transported to Myanmar and Bangladesh, as well as Dubai and Headquarters for further redeployment.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

41. In 1995, a review of the UNHCR operation in Cambodia is envisaged, with planned staffing reductions taking place by the end of June 1994. Further reductions in staffing projected for 1995, followed by reduced activities, could lead to the conversion of UNHCR's presence in Cambodia into a Liaison Office. In any event, UNHCR's presence in Cambodia will have to be maintained in the light of prevailing circumstances in the country, and an appropriate level of staffing will have to be determined in the course of 1995, in order to enable UNHCR to fulfil its statutory and protection-related responsibilities such as the promotion of refugee law, as well as to provide adequate support for voluntary repatriation movements from the region. Monitoring the reintegration of returnees and the situation of IDPs will also continue to be one of the essential functions of the Office.

42. On the basis of staffing changes in 1994, the total initial estimate for 1995 is considerably lower than the 1994 revised requirements, with reductions foreseen under all budget chapters. Further reductions in bugetary requirements will depend on the evolution of UNHCR activities, including a further downward adjustment in staffing levels during the second half of 1995.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN CAMBODIA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
0.4 a/	–	–	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	–
0.4	0.0	0.0	SUB–TOTAL OPERATIONS	0.0
–	–	–	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	–
0.4	0.0	0.0	T O T A L (1)	0.0
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
25,112.8	445.7	1,236.1	CAMBODIA REPATRIATION	626.6
–	–	1,205.5	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	643.0
		193.9	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	44.5
			OTHER TRUST FUNDS	
23.7	82.0		ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer	
25,136.5	527.7	2,635.5	T O T A L (2)	1,314.1
25,136.9	527.7	2,635.5	GRAND TOTAL (1+2)	1,314.1

a/ obligation incurred against Overall Allocation